



UNITED  
KINGDOM  
ATHLETICS

# **SAFE CODE OF PRACTICE**

# **TRACK & FIELD**

(2016) - Supersedes 2007 UKA Safe Codes of Practice

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# UKA HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

## *Summary of relevant section of UKAs H&S Policy*

It is the policy of UKA that all its employees shall comply with relevant statutory provisions, regulations and codes of practice for the purpose of securing the health, safety and welfare at work of all colleagues, so far as is reasonably practicable.

It is also our policy, so far as is reasonably practicable, to safeguard the health and safety of non-employees including athletes, volunteers (coaches, officials and event organisers), visitors, contractors, agency staff and the public who may be affected by our operations.

Statement of general policy	Action
So far as is reasonably practicable, to safeguard the health and safety of athletes, participants and those involved in the delivery of our core activities.	Provide guidance information and resource for those persons and organisations involved in the safe delivery of athletics activity (e.g. coaches, officials, clubs, competition providers and event organisers)

**Signed by:** Xxx

**Date:** Xxx

## **SAFETY IN TRACK & FIELD**

Track and Field Athletics covers a wide range of disciplines from sprints to endurance, pole vault to long jump and hammer to steeplechase and, as with any sport, each individual discipline carries its own inherent risk of injury both for the participant and also those involved or affected by the activity: coaches, officials, facility staff, media, spectators and the general public.

Track and field events themselves are not dangerous, but the way they are conducted can be dangerous and it is particularly important that athletes, coaches and officials all understand the rules and safety protocols for their event.

UKAs Safe Codes of Practice provides guidance on safe practices and aims to cover all of the main safety issues that can occur during athletics training and competition. However, it is impossible to cover every scenario and it is vital that responsible persons (officials and coaches), always use their best judgement in ensuring that an environment is safe before any activity commences.

Following the guidance in this Code of Practice provides the best opportunity to avoid accidents and injuries and help to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

## **WHO'S JOB IN SAFETY?**

Safety is everyone's responsibility whether they are the facility owner, competition provider, official, coach, athlete or spectator and safety should always be the number one priority above all else.

This can be easier said than done and in all endeavours there is a balance to be struck between risk and reward; and varying perceptions of risk means that this "balance" can sometimes be viewed differently by different people.

As a coach, official or event organiser what is important is that safety decisions that are taken are not made in isolation and that there is consultation with others to ensure that any proposed actions reflect those of a "reasonable person", i.e. the legal requirement.

# RISK ASSESSMENT

## The Importance of Risk Assessments

A risk assessment is an important step in protecting everyone who is affected by athletics activities, including athletes, spectators, coaches, volunteers and officials.

Risk Assessments help to focus on the risks that really matter – the ones with the potential to cause significant harm. It is good practice for [venues / coaches/ officials /clubs /event organisers](#) to conduct and record risk assessments using UKAs risk assessment template.

The risk assessment process should seek to involve those with a detailed knowledge and understanding of the activity concerned: coaches, officials, club committee members, competition/event organisers and athletes.

In many cases simple measures can be put in place to control risks. For example regular checks that ensure that: long jump pit landing areas are regularly raked, runways and track surfaces are swept and throws cage netting is checked for holes/gaps. In the majority of cases such simple, inexpensive and effective measures will ensure that all those who participate in athletics events do so in a safe environment.

The law does not expect the complete elimination of risk, but does expect that those involved in the delivery of athletics activity protect people: “as far as is reasonably practicable”.

## Risk Assessment Templates and guidance

The UKA [risk assessment template](#) and [guidance document](#)s provide simple, easy to follow guidance to help ensure the safety of participants across all athletic disciplines in both training and competition settings.

In addition to UKAs guidance the government’s Health and Safety Executive also has excellent resources on its [risk assessment webpage](#).

# INSURANCE (check with Marsh)

*(Just add the section below that is relevant to the Code of Practice: e.g. for coaching CoPs just add the coaching section). Preamble required ....*

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## Athletes

Athletes who have paid subscriptions to a club or organisation affiliated to UKA, England Athletics, Scottish Athletics, Athletics Northern Ireland, or Welsh Athletics, are automatically provided with insurance cover which applies while they are involved in “athletics activities.” This not only relates to training and competing, but also club / region administrative meetings as well as when part of a team representing UKA, England Athletics, Scottish Athletics, Athletics Northern Ireland, or Welsh Athletics.

Click [here](#) for further information

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## Coaches

A Coach or Leader who holds a current UKA pass and licence in the discipline being coached is automatically provided with public liability insurance cover which applies while they are involved in “athletics activities”. This relates not only to training, club / region administrative meetings but also when undertaking coaching for other non UKA affiliated bodies.

It covers unqualified people so long as they are under the direct control of a qualified licensed Coach or Leader and are merely carrying out instructions given to them by that Coach or Leader.

Whether a coach is paid or unpaid is not relevant, the cover applies providing the Coach or Leader is acting within the terms of a current pass and licence.

Click [here](#) for further information

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## Officials

Technical Officials\* who act on behalf of a UKA affiliated club, organisation, or meeting promoter, are automatically provided with insurance cover which applies whilst they are involved in “athletics activities”. This not only relates to competitions, but also club / region administrative meetings.

*\* The term ‘Technical Official’ is defined as being a person who has satisfied the requirement of UK Athletics as set down in the “Rules for Competition” as updated from time to time.*

Click [here](#) for further information

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### **Event Organisers/Promoters**

Organisations that affiliate to UKA for the express purpose of promoting / organising athletic events are automatically provided with Public Liability and Third Party insurance cover.

Click [here](#) for further information

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## ACCIDENT REPORTING

UKA Athletics provides insurance cover to all member athletes and those coaches, officials and event organisers who are affiliated to UK Athletics, SA, EA, WA, ANI etc (check policy wording)

In order to comply with the requirements of our insurers, **an online UKA accident form (possibly hotline)** must be completed every time there is an accident regardless of whether this occurs during an event, training session or other athletics related activity. *Note: Paper copy accident forms are no longer accepted by UKA and ALL accidents / incidents should be reported using the online system to ensure that all future insurance claims can be processed efficiently and effectively.*

UK Athletics does not routinely respond to online accident form submissions. However, it reserves the right to review accident reports where appropriate and provide “expert” investigation support where required

## NEAR MISS REPORTING

A Near Miss is any event, which under slightly different circumstances, may have resulted in injury, illness, or damage. For example: a hammer that exits through a hole in cage netting and narrowly avoids an infield official.

### **Why should I report a Near Miss?**

Many safety initiatives are reactive as opposed to proactive, and there is a tendency to only take remedial action once an accident/injury has occurred. Near miss incidents often come before accidents but are often overlooked as no harm was caused.

History has repeatedly shown that the majority of serious accidents were preceded by warnings or near miss incidents and recognising and reporting near misses is essential in maintaining and improving the safety of all those involved in track and field athletics.

To encourage more widespread reporting of near misses UKA has introduced an anonymous method of reporting near misses via a **Near Miss Hotline (TBC)**

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In addition to complying with insurance requirements, UK Athletics also uses accident and near miss data to produce safety statistics for the sport and inform policies, procedures, rules and regulations to safeguard all those involved.



## MEDICAL PROVISION

**(Consult with DoltSafely – H&S advisors to get a legal view)**

Medical blurb ....There must a reasonable number of first aiders/medical providers at events??, considering the inherent dangers attendant to track and field competition. A failure to have sufficient numbers in any one of these areas can result in liability.

The questions on sufficient, properly qualified personnel to conduct an event / training session safely:

- How many people were needed to reasonably protect those within the competition area from harm?
- How many athletes were expected in the venue?
- By category, what healthcare providers were there and what were their responsibilities?
- What equipment did you have to address injuries that could reasonably be expected?

## COMPETITION/EVENTS

The minimum provision at track and field meetings should be the following:

1. First aiders - number to be determined by meeting organiser.
2. Ability to contact emergency services.

Alternatively in the absence of first aiders a responsible person should be appointed whose role would be the following:

- a) To be aware of the nearest accident and emergency hospital
- b) To be able to arrange transport to a hospital if necessary
- c) To make all necessary telephone communications

Note: This person would not be responsible for any first aid treatment

At larger meetings more specialist medical support may need to be considered.

### Healthcare Personnel

Trainers and other healthcare personnel need to be in sufficient numbers and positioned to be able to respond timely to an injury occurring within the field of competition.

The numbers of these people will depend upon the numbers of competitors. These people need to be qualified to deal with every type of injury that can be expected at a track and field competition from a minor injury to a life-threatening one. In connection with major injuries, those responsible for the conduct of the meet need to be certain that there are readily available means of transporting an injured person to a local healthcare facility that is equipped to handle the injury.

Questions related to healthcare personnel are:

1. Were sufficient healthcare personnel at the venue at all times the athletes were practicing or competing?
2. Were they properly positioned?
3. Did they have adequate equipment for the injuries that were reasonably foreseeable?
4. Was proper hydration available to those in the competition areas?
5. Was the hydration regularly checked to be sure it was available in sufficient amounts?

## **TRAINING**

The minimum provision at track and field meetings should be the following:

**INSERT CODE OF PRACTICE**

## SUMMARY

If an accident is foreseeable to a reasonable person, then reasonable steps must be taken to avoid the injury or there is liability. Following the protocols in this Safe Code of Practice will help to reduce accidents and their resulting consequences but this will only happen if everyone accepts safety as their personal responsibility.

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### Officials

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### Athletes

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### Facility Managers/Operatrs

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### Safety Videos

### Event Organisers

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XX  
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### Facilities

Track cert  
TrackMark  
Insurance  
Rulebook

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Coaching

Officiating

Welfare

Insurance

UKA

EA

WA

ANI

SA

HSE

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